1	BEFORE THE BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
2	OF THE STATE OF MONTANA
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5	BOARD MEETING)
6	JANUARY 5, 2018)
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8	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
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10	Heard at Room 111 of the Metcalf Building
11	1520 East Sixth Avenue
12	Helena, Montana
13	January 5, 2018
14	9:00 a.m.
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16	
17	BEFORE CHAIR CHRIS DEVENY,
18	and CHRIS TWEETEN in person;
19	BOARD MEMBERS JOHN DEARMENT,
20	DEXTER BUSBY, and
21	JOHN FENTON by telephone
22	
23	PREPARED BY: LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPR
24	COURT REPORTER, NOTARY PUBLIC
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1	2 WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were
2	had:
3	* * * *
4	CHAIR DEVENY: Good morning, everybody,
5	and I'd like to call this meeting of the Board of
6	Environmental Review to order. Lindsay, would you
7	please take the roll call.
8	MS. FORD: Chris Deveny.
9	CHAIR DEVENY: Present.
10	MS. FORD: John Felton.
11	MR. FELTON: Present.
12	MS. FORD: Dexter Busby.
13	MR. BUSBY: I'm here.
14	MS. FORD: Hillary Hanson.
15	(No response)
16	MS. FORD: Hillary?
17	(No response)
18	MS. FORD: Tim Warner.
19	(No response)
20	MS. FORD: Tim?
21	(No response)
22	MS. FORD: John Dearment.
23	MR. DEARMENT: Here.
24	MS. FORD: Chris Tweeten.
25	(No response)

MS. FORD: So I have Hillary, Tim, and 1 2 Chris Tweeten not present. We have Chris, John Felton, Dexter Busby, and John Dearment. 3 4 quorum. 5 CHAIR DEVENY: So we do have a quorum. MS. CLERGET: But John is recused, so we 6 7 do not. MR. DEARMENT: (Inaudible) 8 9 CHAIR DEVENY: Sorry. We didn't hear 10 that. This is John Dearment. 11 MR. DEARMENT: Ι was saying I will have to recuse myself from the 12 13 CFAC portion of this, which I think is most of it. CHAIR DEVENY: Yes. Well, we'll wait a 14 15 couple more minutes. 16 (Off the record briefly) 17 (Mr. Tweeten present) 18 CHAIR DEVENY: Chris Tweeten has just arrived to make our quorum complete. The meeting 19 20 has been called to order, and we will proceed. 21 We've done the roll call, and thanks everybody for 22 I appreciate everyone's patience. waiting. 23 And just a reminder to those on the

phone to remember to mute your phones when you're

not speaking, and for the purposes of

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identification for our Court Reporter, to please identify yourselves when you do speak.

So at this point I'm going to turn this meeting over to Sarah to clarify and explain the purpose of why we're here today, and then we'll proceed from there.

MS. CLERGET: So remember at the last meeting we had the proposed order from me that had a bunch of parts at the end, and we got through some of them.

Essentially what's happened is at the last meeting you declared Ben Reed unavailable, and then the next question was what to do about that. CFAC indicated that they needed more time to decide.

We now have a filing in front of us.

For those who are on the phone who don't see it,

I'll just read it quickly. It is from CFAC's

Counsel. It says, "Columbia Falls Aluminum

Company, by and through its Counsel of Record,

submits this notice following the Board of

Environmental Review's December 8th, 2017 decision

that Hearing Officer Ben Reed is unavailable.

CFAC does not seek rehearing in this matter, and

findings of fact may be prepared from the November

2016 record."

So I'm assuming -- I'm looking at

Counsel for CFAC -- that you want this filed in

the record; is that correct?

MS. LAUGHNER: Yes. And I did file it this morning.

MS. CLERGET: Okay. Thank you. So this is part of the record now. And my understanding from DEQ is that, from the last meeting, is that they also have waived the demeanor of witnesses; is that correct?

MR. MOSER: Madam Chair, members of the Board, that is correct. This is Kurt Moser, Counsel for DEQ in this matter.

MS. CLERGET: So now we have both parties waiving the demeanor of the witnesses, which for the purposes of 2-4-622 means you can have a Hearings Examiner review the record of the hearing that Ben Reed conducted.

So the decisions in front of the Board now are: Do you want a Hearing Examiner to do that, or would you like as a Board to review that record? If you want a Hearings Examiner, who do you want as a Hearings Examiner? Do you want me or somebody else? And then to set a schedule for

that review.

I would suggest that if you do choose me as the Hearings Examiner, I believe, with some discussion with the parties, that we can probably get that done by the April meeting, not by the February meeting, because we'll need two weeks for exceptions to any proposed order, and then a week for responses, if that's acceptable to the parties.

If you guys can do simultaneous exceptions, and then a week for response? Would you be able to do that? I'm looking at the parties, for those on the phone.

MR. MOSER: A week might be a bit tight to do responses.

MS. CLERGET: So for those of you on the phone, Kurt is saying that we're going to probably need two weeks for responses. So that would be simultaneous exceptions, and then two weeks for simultaneous responses, so we need a month prior. So I would have to have, whoever the Hearings Examiner is, would have to have the order done a month prior, a little more than a month prior to the April meeting, which I still think is possible for me, just so everybody on the phone knows, as

you deliberate. And CFAC Counsel is standing up.

MS. LAUGHNER: This is Cathy Laughner for Columbia Falls Aluminum Company. I just have a really busy first quarter of this year, and so I don't know if I could do it in two weeks.

MS. CLERGET: If you could do responses in two weeks?

MS. LAUGHNER: Yes. I just wanted to let you know that.

MS. CLERGET: Could you do simultaneous exceptions two weeks after the proposed order, or are you going to need longer for that as well?

MS. LAUGHNER: I expect I would need some more time.

MS. CLERGET: So I will put all of that in front of the Board, so we may need even longer. Would three weeks be possible, for both? So that would be -- because that gives us a month and a half back. So the decision would be due -- The next meeting of BER is April 9th, I believe. I'll double check that. So that would be end of February you'd need to have that. Yes, that's still possible, I think.

MS. LAUGHNER: I'd like to look at what the dates are. January and February -- it depends

on when the findings get out, I think.

MS. CLERGET: So April 6th is the next

BER meeting. So that would mean I would have to

have the findings and conclusions done by the 11th

of February.

Well, if it's acceptable to the Board, given what the parties are saying, that might not even be possible. We might need to push it to the June 8th meeting. So all of that is in front of you for decision, if that makes sense.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you, Sarah. At this point I'd like to ask any of the Board members if they have any questions right now of Sarah about what we're here to do today, and just make sure everybody is clear on that. Chris Tweeten.

MR. TWEETEN: This is for Counsel for CFAC. In reading the submission that you made in writing between the last meeting and this meeting, you raised the issue with respect to the recusal of one of the members of the Board. Is that still a live issue?

CHAIR DEVENY: That Board member has been recused.

MR. TWEETEN: Okay. Great. I'm a

little behind the curve. I missed the meeting last time. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR DEVENY: Do any other Board members have any questions right now?

(No response)

CHAIR DEVENY: Then at this point I would just like to hear from the parties, if they have anything to add from our discussion. Mr. Moser for DEQ.

MR. MOSER: This is Kurt Moser again.

Madam Chair, members of the Board, we have nothing further to add.

CHAIR DEVENY: Thank you. And Ms. Laughner.

MS. LAUGHNER: Cathy Laughner. I just want to make sure everybody is aware that my first quarter of 2018 is pretty booked, and so I'd hate to have come back and ask for more time. So thank you for your consideration.

MR. TWEETEN: Madam Chair, might I suggest that we pass a motion delegating to our Counsel the matters dealing with the scheduling of filing and so forth, so that in her position as Hearing Examiner, she can set deadlines. If the parties need relief from those deadlines, they can

go to her.

I don't think would be a good idea for the Board itself to by motion set deadlines, because then they'd have to come to us to get those deadlines changed, and we'd have set up a special meeting and so forth, which I think is a little burdensome on the parties and also on us.

And I think our Counsel is more than capable to handle the scheduling issues, and keep the Board informed as to what schedules have been made, and if changes have been made, what those changes are and so forth. I'd be happy to make that as a motion if the members of the Board agree.

CHAIR DEVENY: Mr. Tweeten, I hear what you're saying. I also know that this issue has drug on for quite some time, and I just want to make sure that we're not continuing to postpone decisions on this, and if it would -- if indeed Sarah is the Hearings Officer on this, I just want to make sure that she knows what the Board's intentions are in terms of having a rapid -- or not rapid -- but a timely conclusion, and forward movement on this.

MR. TWEETEN: Madam Chair, we previously

bifurcated the Hearing Examiner responsibility for this matter, with our Board Counsel being responsible for procedural things like scheduling, for example, and in expectation that Mr. Reed's findings and conclusions would be filed.

And now it appears pretty clear that they're not going to be filed, and we have to make a decision as to where to assign the responsibility for reviewing the record and preparing the proposed findings and conclusions, where that's going to lie.

But I do think someone has to be in control of the day-to-day procedural changes that are made, motions that are made, and things like that, and I continue to think that it is much more appropriate to have our Counsel act as Hearing Examiner for that purpose, and then if we decide to appoint somebody else to review the record, that would be consistent with the way that we've handled this matter heretofore.

CHAIR DEVENY: Would you --

MR. TWEETEN: Would there be any comment from the other Board members that are on the phone?

MR. BUSBY: This is Dexter Busby. I

tend to agree with Chris on this one.

MR. FELTON: This is John Felton.

Wasn't one of our options previously to appoint a

Hearing Examiner either to do the procedural

stuff, or procedural stuff and the conclusions and
findings?

MR. TWEETEN: Madam Chair, I think that's where we are right now. Do we hire an additional Hearing Examiner, who probably would have to be outside Counsel, rather than another lawyer from ALSB, in order to -- if we don't want Sarah to be responsible for the proposed findings, and I don't think anybody in her office should be either. So we could hire outside Counsel to prepare the findings and conclusions, or we can just give the whole ball of wax to Sarah to deal with.

CHAIR DEVENY: That would be my preference. I believe Sarah can handle this completely. I have full confidence that she would do a good job, and would be fair and open in her work.

MR. TWEETEN: Madam Chair, as do I.

CHAIR DEVENY: So we do need --

MR. FELTON: This is John Felton. I

agree with that, and I would make that motion that we appoint Sarah as the Hearing Officer, both for purposes of the procedures, and the findings and conclusions.

CHAIR DEVENY: And I would second that.

Is there any discussion on the motion?

MR. BUSBY: This is Dexter again. I don't have any issues with Sarah on this, but there has been so much inadvertent issues with this whole thing. I personally think we would be better off with an outside Counsel, because irregardless how this comes down, I'm afraid this may go on to court if not -- we don't have somebody totally unbiased and not tainted. And I fear anybody from the Department may be tainted on this, so I'm just concerned a little about that.

CHAIR DEVENY: Any other comments on the motion?

(No response)

CHAIR DEVENY: CFAC, would you like to respond to Mr. Dexter's comment at all?

MS. LAUGHNER: This is Cathy Laughner for the record. I don't have any objection to Sarah. There have been a lot of anomalies in this procedure, but it is a new year, so I'm ready to

move forward most efficiently.

CHAIR DEVENY: I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

MR. TWEETEN: Madam Chair, it seems to me that solves Dexter's problem about this becoming an issue on appeal, because as I understand what CFAC's Counsel just said, they're basically waiving any objection to the idea of having Sarah serve both functions.

CHAIR DEVENY: I believe I heard that,
too, and Dexter, are you comfortable with that?

MR. BUSBY: Yes. Very comfortable with

Sarah. I have no objections to Sarah. I'm just -- the whole process has got some issues.

CHAIR DEVENY: And I think we've worked through that at our last meeting, and I think we're all ready to move forward with the new Board and a new year, so unless you had other comments.

MR. TWEETEN: Madam Chair, just one brief. Last night I went through the minutes, and looked at parts of the transcripts of prior meetings going back to a year ago November, I guess, when this whole problem started.

And I noted that CFAC's Counsel has been present for virtually all of the discussions

regarding the problem that we've been left with by Mr. Reed's departure; and except for the written filing that they made recently, CFAC hasn't raised any objections to the decisions to delay the matter in hopes that Mr. Reed would be able to perform his function.

So even though I agree with Dexter that the procedure here has been quite convoluted, and I think it is because this is an usual case. I've not seen a case of the missing Hearing Examiner in all the time I've been on boards in State government.

So it is a very unusual set of facts, I think. And given the cooperation that's existed between CFAC and the Department regarding how to deal with this issue, my sense is that a lot of the procedural wrinkles have essentially been waived by CFAC, given their acquiescence, or agreement actually, with the ideas that the Department and the Board have followed to try to solve this problem.

So hopefully this won't give rise to a huge legal wrangle if the matter goes up on appeal. There is a lot more important issues I think than this one that might be subject to

appeal argument by the parties. So I hear what

Dexter is saying. My sense is it is not likely to

become a big problem.

CHAIR DEVENY: If there are no other comments from Board members, I would like to call the question on the motion and have a vote. First of all, are there any other comments?

(No response)

CHAIR DEVENY: We're going to vote on this motion then. And all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Response)

CHAIR DEVENY: Any opposed?

(No response)

CHAIR DEVENY: Motion carries. Thank you.

MS. CLERGET: This is Sarah. Given what you said about the schedule, are you comfortable that I can set the schedule, with the understanding that -- and I think the parties have heard as well that we want this resolved as soon as possible. I think we will shoot for the June meeting, to have it done by the June meeting, and work hard to get that done.

CHAIR DEVENY: I'm comfortable with the

1	June meeting, but I'd feel a little distressed if
	June meeting, but I'd leer a little distressed if
2	it went beyond that, so I really hope
3	MS. CLERGET: I think the parties heard
4	that as well, so we're all on the same page.
5	CHAIR DEVENY: Any other comments about
6	the scheduling?
7	(No response)
8	CHAIR DEVENY: With that, I think we've
9	resolved all the issues that we came here for
10	today, and again, I thank CFAC for their patience
11	and cooperation in this. Chris, did you have
12	something?
13	MR. TWEETEN: No.
14	CHAIR DEVENY: At this point, I would
15	like to open this meeting up for general public
16	comments on issues other than contested cases. Is
17	there any public comment?
18	(No response)
19	CHAIR DEVENY: Hearing none, I believe
20	we're ready to move to adjournment then if
21	somebody would so move.
22	MR. TWEETEN: So moved.
23	CHAIR DEVENY: I'll second it. All

those in favor, say aye.

(Response)

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1	CHAIR DEVENY: All those opposed.
2	(No response)
3	CHAIR DEVENY: None. Thank you very
4	much, everybody. And we'll hopefully see a lot of
5	you in February, and Happy New Year.
6	MR. BUSBY: This is Dexter. Could I get
7	the new schedule, confirmed schedule for 2018
8	mailed out again, please?
9	MS. FORD: Yes. I will do that.
10	MR. BUSBY: Thank you, Lindsay.
11	(The proceedings were concluded
12	at 9:25 a.m.)
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CERTIFICATE 1 2 STATE OF MONTANA) : SS. 3 COUNTY OF LEWIS & CLARK 4 I, LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPR, Court Reporter, 5 Notary Public in and for the County of Lewis & 6 7 Clark, State of Montana, do hereby certify: That the proceedings were taken before me at 8 the time and place herein named; that the 9 10 proceedings were reported by me in shorthand and transcribed using computer-aided transcription, 11 12 and that the foregoing - 18 - pages contain a true 13 record of the proceedings to the best of my 14 ability. 15 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal 16 17 this _____, 2017. 18 19 LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPR 20 Court Reporter - Notary Public 21 My commission expires 22 March 9, 2020. 23 24 25

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